Rajasthan marriage market, IAS, IPS and IRS officers command the highest price at over Rs. one crore in cash besides gold gifts and flashy weddings;

(b) whether this is in accordance with Government's conduct rules; and

(c) if not, the steps Government propose to bring home the provision in the conduct rules and the concerned officers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRISURESH PACHOURI): (a) Government of Rajasthan has informed that it has no information about the existence of any such market in Rajasthan.

(b) and (c) IAS/IPS officers are governed by the All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968 and IRS officers are governed by the Central Civil Service (Conduct) Rules, 1964. These rules prohibit giving or taking of dowry or abetting thereof. The attention of officers is drawn to these provisions during their training in the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration.

Coal reforms

*435. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to address the issue of coal sector reforms, immediately;

(b) whether Finance Minister addressing media has pointed out after stock taking of Government's economic performance a year after it came to power, that power sector could not record higher growth due to shortage of coal;

(c) if so, what are the proposed reforms to be considered in regard to coal;

(d) whether any concrete policy has been framed and prepared; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and by when a final decision in starting coal reforms are to be initiated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The following reform measures have been initiated/are proposed:

(1) The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 was introduced in Rajya Sabha in April, 2000 which seeks to permit private participation in coal mining, without the present restriction of captive use, in order to augment coal production in the country.

(2) Pricing of coal was de-regulated with effect from 1.1.2000. The Tariff Commission is being involved in pricing of coal for the Power Sector and to suggest modalities for pricing of coal for other sectors.

(3) Import of Coal has been liberalised and has been placed under the Open General License (OGL). Import duty has also been reduced to 5%.

(4) Allocation process for captive coal blocks has been streamlined. 86 Coal blocks have been allotted/decided for allocation.

(5) A proposal to decide allocation of Coal blocks on competitive bidding basis is under consideration of the Government.

(6) To facilitate early production from captive blocks, disposal of coal production during the development phase to CIL has been allowed.

(7) Greater autonomy given to the subsidiaries of Coal India Limited, by delegating powers relating to procurement of all items except explosives to the subsidiaries.

(8) Sale of coal through electronic auction was introduced during 2005-06 on trial basis where consumers and traders can participate for their requirement of coal from preferred sources.

(9) A pilot study to generate sufficient data for gradation of coal on the basis of Gross Calorific Value (GCV) has been entrusted to the Central Fuel Research Institute.

(10) Ministry of Coal has communicated to the Department of Consumer Affairs its concurrence to deletion of coal from the list of essential commodities.

(11) The revival package for ECL and BCCL are presently under consideration of the Board of Re-construction for the Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE).

(12) As per the existing policy, 100% FDI for setting up plants for processing of coal and captive mine for power plants, 74% for exploration or mining for captive production for other end uses (Iron & Steel, Cement) is allowed. The Ministry had recommended to the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion that FDI cap may be raised to 100% for exploration and mining of coal/ lignite for captive consumption for all permissible activities and this should be allowed through the automatic route.

(13) CIL is exploring the possibilities of acquiring coal properties abroad.

(d) and (e) The Government has constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri T.L. Shankar to suggest measures to reform the coal sector. The report of the Committee is awaited.

Exploitation of Indian workers abroad

*436. SHRIMATIAMBIKASONI:
DR. T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to take measures to curb exploitation of Indians taking up overseas employment;

(b) if so, whether Government have also started taking stringent action against recruiting agencies found guilty of cheating Indians taken to the Gulf with promises of employment;

(c) if so, whether the Minister during his recent visit to UAE, his first had feel of condition of Indians had convinced him that unscrupulous recruiting agencies were responsible for miseries that some Indians, especially labour class, face there; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken or are likely to take to protect the interests of Overseas Indians which are being exploited in many countries?